

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-09 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00
FEA-01 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
EPG-02 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-15 OES-07
SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 PA-02 PRS-01
/159 W

-----230623Z 001724 /13

R 230501Z MAY 77

FM AMCONSUL DHARAHAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5454
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY QUITO
USLO RIYADH
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
PPWLI/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 133
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS DHAHRAN 0592

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG, SA
SUBJECT: FIRE AT ARAMCO'S ABQAIQ FACILITY

1. ON MAY 19 ARAMCO CHAIRMAN FRANK JUNGERS HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE FOR SAUDI JOURNALISTS AND STATED THAT ARAMCO EXPECTS TO RESTORE ITS TOTAL PRODUCTION LEVEL TO THE APRIL 30 PRE-FIRE LEVEL BY THE END OF MAY. REPAIR WORK IS PROCEEDING SO RAPIDLY, ACCORDING TO JUNGERS, THAT THE COMPANY EXPECTS TO OBTAIN 90 PERCENT OF THE END OF APRIL PRODUCTION LEVEL BY MAY 24. ARAMCO'S ABQAIQ FACILITIES HAVE BEEN PROCESSING CRUDE OIL FOR SEVERAL DAYS, AND SOME CRUDE HAS ALSO BEEN DIVERTED AROUND THE ABQAIQ PLANT. A MULTI-NATIONAL WORK FORCE OF 2,000 UN USING HUGE FLEETS OF CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT IS WORKING AROUND THE CLOCK TO RESTORE THE LOST PRODUCTION CAPACITY.

2. THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM FOR A GROUP OF SAUDI JOURNALISTS REPRESENTING ALL SAUDI DAILY NEWSPAPERS, A WEEKLY PUBLICATION, AND THE SAUDI PRESS AGENCY. THE JOURNALISTS WERE ALSO FLOWN OVER THE SITE OF THE FIRE, GIVEN EXTENSIVE BRIEFINGS ON THE GROUND WITH BLOWN UP MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS, AND THEN FLOWN TO RAS TANURA TO OBSERVE HOW MUCH CRUDE OIL IS REACHING THE BIG MARINE TERMINAL. ARAMCO ARRANGED THE TOUR AND PRESS CONFERENCE IN AN ATTEMPT TO DAMPEN DOWN WIDESPREAD RUMORS ABOUT THE EXTENT OF LOSSES AND DURATION OF REDUCED PRODUCTION.

3. JUNGERS SAID THE CAUSE OF THE EXPLOSION, WHICH OCCURRED SEVEN FEET UNDERGROUND, WAS EXTERNAL CORROSION OF UNCLASSIFIED

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A SHORT SECTION OF A 30 YEAR OLD, 30- INCH PIPELINE.

4. ARAMCO STILL HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO COME UP WITH AN ESTIMATE OF THE TOTAL FINANCIAL LOSS DUE TO THE FIRE. EXECUTIVES HAVE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT THE PLANT WAS INSURED THROUGH LLOYDS OF LONDON AND THE COMPANY WILL BE REIMBURSED FOR MOST OF THE LOSS.

5. THE SAUDI MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM HAS ANNOUNCED SAUDI ARABIA'S PRODUCTION AND EXPORTS FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL. PRODUCTION TOTALED 299,848,418 BARRELS, BROKEN DOWN AS FOLLOWS:

BERRI 22,821,374
ARABIAN LIGHT 215,196,252
ARABIAN MEDIUM 14,382,937
ARABIAN HEAVY 47,447,855

AVERAGE PRODUCTION WAS 9,994,947 BPD. AVERAGE

EXPORTS WERE 9,475,244 BPD, OF WHICH ARAMCO
ACCOUNTED FOR 9,317,845 BPD, THE ARABIAN OIL COMPANY
(JAPAN) LUUNTEE BPD AND GETTY OIL 69,866 BPD.
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Message Attributes

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